616
the *sukirikionó* would paint half their bodies 796
white and the other half black. 302

SOCIAL CLASSES

In addition to the dual division, the Terena 565
were separated into four social classes: (1) Chiefs
(*unati*), (2) warriors (*shuna'asheti*), (3) com-
moners (*wahereshane*), and (4) slaves (*kauti*).
The chiefly class comprised the moiety chiefs and
their relatives. The *unati* were the highest class [582]
in rank and were supposed to marry within their
own group. As one could marry only within his
own moiety this often meant village exogamy to 881
members of this class. On coming of age the sons 565
of the *unati* went through an elaborate puberty 622
ceremony (*tima*) which amounted to initiation
into the chiefly class. In historic times the prin-
cipal part of the ceremony consisted in the boy ap- [292]
proaching his father dressed in a light-red blan-
ket which he would take off and substitute for the
dark-red blanket worn by his father. Only the
sons of the *unati* went through this ceremony.
The daughters of the chiefs also went through a [562]
puberty ceremony (*iyoti*) much more elaborate [554]
than the puberty ceremony of the daughters of
common people.

All the living war chiefs and their children and 565
relatives made up the warrior class. Here, again,
marriage within the group was demanded. Com- [641]
moners were free tribesmen who had not acquired
status through war or marriage into the two upper
classes. Slaves were young women and children 567
captured in raids, or the children of war captives. 565
Slaves performed services for their masters, fol-
lowed them in war and danced with them during
ceremonials. If a slave distinguished himself in
war by killing an enemy he could become a free
man. It is said that a slave could even become
a war chief if he were particularly successful in
war. On the other hand, a slave could be sold or
killed by his master.

In war, moiety differences were disregarded and 616
the village acted as a unit. Every large village 701
had a war chief (*shuna'asheti*) who held office both 726
in war and peace and was the head of the war- 554
rior class. As an individual he had the highest
rank in the village and drank first at all cere- [534]
monies. He, too, carried a cow's horn trumpet
as a symbol of rank. In addition, he wore a [292]
jaguar skin shirt and a head band of parrot [237]
feathers.

[p. 28-B]

G /146 cont./

*177 178 640 The segregated condition to which the aldea population is subjected stimulates the emergence of psycho-social mechanisms that work counter to assimilation: it strengthens the "tribal we," decreases the possibilities of interethnic contact, and marks the position of the Indian socially as a ward. Let us examine this last aspect of segregation, since the first two--the strengthening of tribal consciousness and the creation of obstacles to interethnic contact--were already dealt with in previous chapters. The most flagrant discrimination against the Indian that we had the opportunity to witness bore the approval of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios at the time of the 1955 elections. In that year, at the end of September, thus on the eve of the elections, the Inspetoria Regional (IR-5) with headquarters in Campo Grande and responsible for the supervision and articulation of the native posts /147/ of southern Mato Grosso, along with the central administration of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios, decided to withdraw the Indians' voting certificates on the grounds that regional politicking would be prejudicial to the Indians' interests and to their administration. It considered--with some reason--that, if the Indians were to vote, the officials of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios, especially the superintendents, would eventually become electoral leaders, as had already happened in some aldeas; the result of this would be a future wrangling over the posts of native-post superintendents, since they would come to represent political power, electoral importance. Very well. Such were the reasons that led the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios--through its inspetoria--to take an attitude that clashed with the basic principles of a native policy oriented toward guaranteeing to the Indian the securing of rights he would prove ready to enjoy. Once literate, and in most cases, a reservist, the Indian elector automatically ceased to be a ward (despite the sui generis nature of this wardship)--and the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios, interpreting in a positive way the protectionist policy, would have no other recourse than to insure

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G [641]